

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

Instruction.

Matthew Arnold's Poems.

POEMS. By MATTHEW ARNOLD. 2 vols. 16 mo. pp. vii, 272; viii, 350. Macmillan & Co.

The new "cabinet edition" of Matthew Arnold's poetry, which has just been issued as a companion to the new edition of his prose, is a pretty piece of book-making which we should like to recommend to the notice of some of our famous American houses. It will take the eye of every buyer, but perhaps only a connoisseur will quite realize how good it is; how perfectly the pure white paper—substantial, yet not too heavy—sets off the clear text; how justly the size of the shaped letter is proportioned to the page; what a style of neatness, propriety and simplicity distinguishes the general make-up and dress of the volumes. Altogether they are charming books to handle, and if the binding were as strong as it is handsome we might call them models of what books of poetry for practical use ought to be. But English binders, in working with muslin have as much to learn as ours, though in a different direction. The cabinet edition of Mr. Arnold's writings is moderate in price, and is meant to be read rather than looked at.

The poems best represent his permanent influence. As an essayist and a critic he has greatly agitated the common thought of his time, and has aroused a discerning and inquiring spirit in thousands to whom no poetry of the serious sort appeals. But his prose, because it belongs so truly to the contemporary current, is bound up with controversies and tendencies which before very many years must run their course. In his poetry he touches a high level of thought, and reaches his purest style, and his best work in this form is certain to last. Students of English poetry have complained of him for abandoning verse; but perhaps he is right. It is well for a poet to be remembered only by the songs of his musical and impassioned youth. We have heard too many bards piping in one or two issues, unconscious that the impulse which once excited them had lost its force.

Mr. IRVING'S ACTING

HENRY IRVING, Actor and Manager. A Criticism of a Critic. Criticism. By an IRVINGITE. 16mo. \$0.80

London: George Routledge & Sons.

This is one of the numerous little books that are incident to the career of a much discussed actor. It replies to various strictures upon Mr. Irving's acting, made by a certain—or uncertain—Mr. William Archer, and it shows a tart temper and lively turn for sarcasm. Theatrical collectors may like to have the book, but nobody else, surely, would be at the trouble to follow the details of a critical squabble.

The elegant edition of Longfellow's "Michael Angelo" is not only one of the handsomest books on the list of Houghton, Mifflin & Co., but it is peculiarly attractive from the novelty of its style. Unlike the major y of holiday publications, it shows fine taste in every detail of the work—the ample page, the clear and stately letter, the heavy white paper, the arrangement of the wood-cuts, and the rich yet simple covers. It was the intention of the poet that the drama should be illustrated when it appeared in book form, and in carrying out his wishes the publishers have sought to make the pictures what such ornaments ought to be—genuine illustrations of the text. "Michael Angelo" is not a great poem, nor, although it is dramatic in form, has it much of the dramatic character. It is a series of detached scenes, representing the artist in the company of various historical personages of his time, without either movement or story. But in spite of its defects as a literary work it abounds in opportunities for the draughtsman and engraver. Authentic portraits of most of the prominent characters in it are presented, and an account of these likenesses, with additional outline drawings, is given in notes at the end of the volume. These historical illustrations are the most important and most interesting; here the imaginary situations of the poem have also furnished subjects for a variety of pencils, sometimes with pleasing results.

Henry L. Carmel's Kolle, and published in a pretty little volume with lined paper, red-line borders, and a yellow cover. (London: Griffith & Farran, New York: E. P. Dutton & Co.)

It is more comprehensive than the title indicates, for the prose writers as well as the poets have been laid under contribution to furnish the able of contents.

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